

ship of the Maringa chief. The two first groups went first to Kupatcam, The Pipes, where the Atü'aviatum lived. From the time they left this place, the party began to *witc-at*. This term refers to communal, that is, ceremonial, eating. When any ceremony whatever was to be undertaken, the requisition for the feast upon the proper heads of families was the *witc-at*. So on this trip all provisions were turned into a common fund by the heads of the families, and distributed by the chief through the *paha*. The first piñon nuts were given to the chief by every family, and these were used for his *witc-at* at the annual feast which always followed this trip very shortly.

The cones were thrown into the embers of a fire and raked out when the nuts had loosened. According to one informant they were also roasted under cover. They were then struck against something to loosen the nuts, and these were ground into flour in mortars, shells and all. There was no winnowing.

Many deer were taken during this trip. All night ceremonies were held over each one, and the work of cutting the meat and dressing the skin was the work of the men. What meat was left over was dried in slabs, and taken home. To prepare it for eating it was cooked partially, then pounded, and finished off by roasting. The bones were pounded in the mortars while fresh, and eaten in a sort of paste.

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THE SHAMAN OF NIUE

By E. M. LOEB

NIUE, or Savage Island, is situated in latitude 19° 10' south, longitude 190° 17' west. The nearest land is Vavau, of the Tonga group, distant nearly west 240 miles. The island was discovered by Captain Cook in 1774, and Christianized by Paulo, a native of Samoa, in 1849. Sir Basil Home Thomson brought the island under the British Protectorate in 1900. In 1901 Mr. Percy Smith was sent as Government Resident for the purpose of annexing the island to New Zealand. During the four months which Mr. Smith spent on the island he found the opportunity to study the native language and culture, and the results of his investigations have been published in the Journal of the Polynesian Society.

The author of this paper spent seven months on Niue, commencing August, 1923, for the purpose of making an anthropological survey of the Niueans for the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum of Honolulu.

The original culture of Niue differed in certain vital respects from the culture of other islands in Polynesia with which I am acquainted. The people lived virtually under a democracy, and were unacquainted with any system of divine chiefs, caste division of labor, or hereditary priesthood. They were also not given to the memorizing of lengthy genealogies. The absence of these factors in the culture of Niue may be accounted for in either of two ways. (1) The people may be the descendants of immigrants from Samoa or Tonga who embarked upon their voyage without the guidance of priests or highborn leaders. (2) The people of Niue may have left their immediate homeland before the development of aristocracy and theocracy.

If we assume for the present that the second reason be the true one, the nature of the "priests" of Niue becomes an interesting topic of study, for the "priesthood" of Niue will then resemble in form the "priesthood" of the ancient home island of the

Niuean people, or, in other words, it will be an archaic survival perpetuated by comparative isolation.

The so-called "priests" of Niue are termed *taula-atua*, or anchor of the gods. Mr. Gifford informs me that the inspirational priests of Tonga are called *taula-otua*, while Stair writes as follows concerning the priests of Old Samoa: "The Taula-aitu, 'anchors of the spirits', from *taula*, an anchor, and *aitu*, spirit, formed the priesthood, and possessed great influence over the minds of the people. They may be classed under four heads; viz.: Prophets or Sorcerers, Family Priests, Priests of the War Gods, and Keepers of the War Gods."¹ The priests who exorcised evil spirits in the Marquesas Islands were called *tau'a hiko etua*, or priests who extracted gods. Thus the nomenclature is widespread in the Pacific.

The function of the *taula-atua* of Niue differs greatly, however, from the functions of the ordinary priesthood of Polynesia. There were no classes of the Niuean *taula-atua*, but every individual was capable of performing all of the duties incumbent upon his profession; those of bewitching, curing, prophesying, and cursing the enemy. Due to the nature of these functions, I believe that it is best not to refer to the Niuean *taula-atua* as a priest, but rather as a shaman. I believe that the functions performed by this class of people in Niue can be best compared to the functions performed by the shaman of Siberia. The people of Niue themselves do not, and never have, thought of the *taula-atua* as a priest. The word used for priest in the Niuean translation of the Old Testament is *eke poa*, gift maker. The *taula-atua* of Niue never made gifts to the gods. The people made their own offerings in a manner similar to that of the Homeric Greeks.

It will be noticed that the Niue word for the shaman is *taula-atua*, anchor of the gods, and not *taula-aitu*, anchor of the spirits. In the olden days the priests of Niue were possessed by gods, (*tupua* or *atua*) and not by ghosts (*aitu*). Today they are possessed by ghosts, and not by the heathen gods. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the *taula-atua* of today is looked down upon by

¹ J. B. Stair, *Old Samoa*, p. 70, London, 1897.

most of the natives as being a deceiver (*tangata-pikopiko*). The teachings of the missionaries, no doubt, also aid in bringing these impostors into discredit. When a native is sick, however, he will go to the *taula-atua* sooner than visit the government doctor. In spite of the general attitude of the people toward the present day *taula-atua*, those of the past are still regarded with a feeling of awe and respect.

Bewitching. The natives of Niue have always been fairly free from fears of being bewitched. I have heard of one man who never left any remnants about when he ate bananas or when he spat, but this man was regarded as eccentric. Thomson writes,² "A common form of witchcraft was to take up the soil on which an enemy had set his footprint and carry it to a sacred place (the *matafaiunga*?), where it was solemnly cursed in order that he might be afflicted with lameness."—"Nowadays no spell can be more fatal than to imprison one of the sacred *moko* lizards in a bottle and bury it at the foot of a cocoanut tree with an appropriate curse, to destroy any person who may drink of the water of the nuts. To ensure the working of this spell it was, of course, essential that the victim should come to know of his impending doom; a hint was enough to lay him on his bed from sheer fright."

I imagine that the *taula-atua* was usually employed for the purpose of bewitching a person. Nowadays it is a trifle difficult for the *taula-atua* to work merely by the power of mental suggestion, and hence they are wont to employ poisons imported from Tonga or Fiji.

Prophesying and Spell Casting. The infallibility of the *taula-atua* was considered to be due to the fact that he was one possessed by the gods. Hence the usual badge for office lay in the liability of the man or woman to be subject to epileptic fits. If the person were not epileptic he was at least a victim of temporary insanity. I believe that fakers were unknown to the profession in the olden days, nor have I heard of any artificial means employed by which delusions were induced. Necessarily the profession of *taula-atua* ran in families, these families being the ones afflicted with a high degree of mental instability. The profession of *taula-atua* did not

² Basil Thomson, *Savage Island*, p. 97, London, 1902.

necessarily go from father to son, but sometimes skipped a generation, depending on the inheritance of the mental ailment.

The *taula-atua* was the weather man of the olden days. There was formerly a *taula-atua* named Fakailikula. He said that he was the ruler of the rain and the sun. Then a drought came to the island and the people went to him and asked him to let the rain fall. So he said to the people: "You are to work and plant all your fruits, then I will let the rain down and permit the plants to grow". After this the *taula-atua* went and carried a big stone until he came to a chasm with water at the bottom. There he prayed and turned the stone *seven* times on his head, then he threw the stone down into the well. The water came gushing up and splashed the top. At this sign the *taula-atua* called out to the people that there would presently be a heavy rain. The people waited and waited for the rain, but there was no rain. Then the *taula-atua* told the people to go down to the sea and dive into the holes on the reef, and that would surely bring rain. So the people went down and dove into all the holes in the reef, but still no rain came, for the *taula-atua* had lied.

It must not be supposed that the *taula-atua* were always unsuccessful in their efforts to produce rain. There was once a drought on the island; then the following *taula-atua*, Tukumulia, Tapuakikula, and Manongiholahetoea, called out to the people to come and march along holding a staff and hoisting a tapa flag (*matini*). This was for the purpose of producing rain. After two nights had passed there was heavy rain and the land was flooded. Then these *taula-atua* were considered the best, because their gods were able to produce rain. These *taula-atua* all lived at Lakepa.

The business of being a *taula-atua* was somewhat risky, for some time after this Tukumulia and Manongiholahetoea lost their reputations. It seems that certain of the natives went off in a canoe in order to beg fish hooks and earrings from a sailing vessel seen in the distance. The boat was further off than the natives had expected, and the result was that the pursuing canoe never returned to Niue. While the relatives of the lost natives were waiting they consulted the two *taula-atua*. These men, after they had been properly inspired by their gods, informed

the families to prepare a feast of taro, for the canoe would return the next day. Unfortunately the canoe never returned.

The third *taula-atua* of Lakepa, Tapuakikula, was a woman. She had the same gods as Tukumulia. Tapuakikula wore earrings on her toes. When feasts were given with dances, she went out to dance, and when she danced the earrings on her toes rattled. This caused the gods Niuloea, Falahi, Upi, and other lesser gods to rejoice. This *taula-atua* had many men: one of them was a Tongan *taula-atua*. The gods of this woman took good care of the sick people, because these gods saw that she was a fine big woman and that she had many men. So the gods were kind to the people that came to this *taula-atua*.

When Tapuakikula's sons grew up they married her, because they saw that she was a beautiful woman with earrings on her toes, and that she danced every time a dance was given. So all of the people were proud of her, and they rejoiced greatly.

Curing. One cause of sickness in the old days was supposed to be the loss of a man's soul (*angaanga*). In this case the man would go to the *taula-atua* and beg for the return of his soul. The *taula-atua* would be properly paid, and he would then send his *tupua* (gods) to look for the soul. The *taula-atua* would usually claim that the sea snakes had abducted the soul. If the *taula-atua* were able to recover the soul the sick person survived. If the *taula-atua* was unsuccessful, the sick person was apt to die from fright.

When a *taula-atua* was performing a cure, he always went into a trance or fit, thus establishing communication with his gods. He would keep up an incessant whistling at the same time. I have received the following information concerning the methods of cure employed by Tukumulia of Lakepa.

Niuloea, Falahi, and Upi were the gods that he prayed to. If a man was crippled, Tukumulia chewed some bitter leaves, such as the leaf of the *fumamala* tree, the leaf of the *moota* tree, and other bitter leaves of the bush. After these were thoroughly chewed, the *taula-atua* blew them into the ears and nostrils of the patient. Then Tukumulia called out to Niuloea, Falahi, and Upi, while the people stayed behind to ask the *taula-atua* which

god would come, whether it would be Niuloa or Falahi or Upi. Then the *taula-atua* called out to Falahi to come and help him heal the person.

Some of the people lived, but others died. This was because the *taula-atua* only called upon one god to help him. (Evidently the *taula-atua* often called upon the wrong god!)

I find mention made of another *taula-atua* of the olden days. Her name was Faneheone, and she lived at Tuapa. When she went out to cure a man who was sick, she first wrapped up his body with herbs, and then she made a hat of some bitter herbs for his head. Finally she chewed some leaves and spat them out on the man who was sick, calling upon her gods.

Cursing the Enemy. The *taula-atua* was called upon by parties about to engage in warfare to prophesy the result of the conflict and to paralyze the enemy through the ceremony of *tungi maama*. This was a curse performed by the passing of spears through the smoke of a fire.

The Present-day Taula-atua. As I have said before, the people of Niue pretend to look down upon the present-day *taula-atua*. When I informed my native friends that I proposed paying a visit to a famous *taula-atua* of Liku, Titituli by name, I was urged not to go. I was told that the cures practiced nowadays are mostly all importations to the island from either Samoa, Tonga, or Fiji. I was also told that the beliefs of the present-day *taula-atua* are all *pikopiko* (false), and that they did not represent the opinions of the mass of the people.

Needless to say, I did not give up my proposed trip. However, the above information should be kept in mind when reading the accounts given of the present-day *taula-atua*. Any opinion that they express on the subject of *aitu* (ghosts) or about the future world, represent the beliefs of the class of *taula-atua* themselves, rather than the ideas of the people of Niue as a whole.

I found Titituli living in rather squalid surroundings a short distance from the center of the village. He was an elderly man, of age unknown. He was unkempt in appearance, and covered with sores from the yaws. He also suffered from elephantiasis, and his right leg was badly swollen. Finally, he was subject to

epileptic fits, and it was this fact which accounted for his official position in life. Titituli maintained his customary state of health until a couple of months after my visit, when while smoking in bed one night, he set it on fire. At present he limps around painfully, due to the fact that one of his sides is badly burned.

After the usual gifts of tobacco and canned meat were presented, I questioned the *taula-atua* concerning his ancestors. He informed me that his father was not a *taula-atua*, but that his grandfather, Munga-ulu, was one. The father was not subject to epileptic fits, but the grandfather was.

I was given the following information on the subject of the *aitu*, and the curing of people.

My informant is in the custom of communicating with his dead elder brothers, Fatamaka and Haimatatau. He actually sees them. When they come they are *fakamauli*, in black form. When the ghosts appear, the *taula-atua* usually loses consciousness, but at times he sees the ghosts without losing his senses.

The ghosts pay the *taula-atua* a visit when somebody is sick. They inform him as to whether the patient is likely or not to live, and whether he is worthwhile treating. If the patient is a hopeless case the ghosts tell this to the *taula-atua*; they also tell the *taula-atua* how to compound the medicines. If he makes a mistake, they come back and tell him. While compounding his medicines, Titituli recited the following charm:

"*Hoko hinga fou tavali ke tavali kehe tuanaki noa, nofo jakaoti.*" ("My name is new shaking, shaking because you are coming, remain until the end.")

Titituli uses leaves in the making up of his medicines. He also uses the barks of various trees, as the *telie* tree, the *panopano* tree, the *kahame* tree, and the *ngahu* tree. The leaves and barks are well mixed and then wrapped in *lau-kaka*, the outside fibre of the cocoanut tree. This mixture is then distilled in water.

The *taula-atua* rubbed leaves on his hands before he went to a patient to administer massage. The Niue people were very fond of massage, and it was considered efficient for the driving out of evil spirits. At other times the *taula-atua* made bad smells by the pounding of leaves, and he drove out the *aitu* in this

manner. Or else he placed one leaf on the patient's mouth, and another on the patient's nose, and thereby relieved the sufferer from the ghosts, since they were unable to bear the smell of the leaves. The ghosts came out of the sufferer in the form of human beings. I asked the *taula-atua* whether the ghosts ever took refuge in animals on being driven out of the patient, as, for example, in swine, as was the case according to the words of the New Testament; but the *taula-atua* denied that this has ever happened in Niue.

The *taula-atua* often beat and cut people in order to relieve them of their unpleasant spiritual parasites. Titituli denied using these forms of cures. The Niue people have always been fond of bleeding themselves with a shark's tooth in order to relieve headache, but this is usually a matter of home treatment, as is massage (*tukituki*).

On being questioned further concerning the nature of the *aitu*, Titituli gave the following information.

"Sometimes I can see the ghosts (*aitu*) sitting on the tops of graves. They often travel together in flocks. Only angry *aitu* attack people. They first attack people by entering into them on the shoulders, or ears, or the back of the neck, or the thigh. Ghosts whistle and call out to one another. They do not address ordinary beings, however.

"When people eat good food, and live in comfortable houses, the ghosts become angry. Then they enter into (*heke*) this kind of people and make them sick.

"When human beings die they linger around the earth. The relatives of the dead wait to catch the ghost and wash it clean so that it may become bright and visible to others in *po*. The names of the ghost islands are (1) Fonua Ngalo, the Missing Land, (2) Ha Tala Fale, and (3) Namu Efi. (I cannot translate the second name. The third is identical with the name of an ancient god, and means pleasant smell.) Spirits travel on top of the water, and thus go from one of these islands to the others. They travel on pieces of wood which are propelled by the tides. A small piece of wood will hold from 300 to 400 ghosts. Baby spirits go to Fonua Ngalo. They grow up there and come back to

take revenge upon their parents if they were murdered as infants."

Wishing to obtain further information concerning the modern *taula-atua* of Niue, I next consulted Hipa, the native chief of police. The administration had for a long time been combating the influence of the *taula-atua*, and I correctly inferred that Hipa would have records regarding the doctrines and practices of the modern practitioners of this occult art. The following texts refer to some of the *taula-atua* with whom Hipa has had dealings, either recently or in the past.

(1) The male *taula-atua* of Tuapa. It was his custom to prepare medicine from various countries; some of the medicines were taken from Tonga and some from Fiji. He gave his medicines to people to eat, if they were ghost-ridden as shown by their having pains in their chests. All of his ghosts were blind.

Suddenly the ghosts of Fiji and the ghosts of Tonga fought, and the ghosts of Tonga were defeated whilst those of Fiji were victorious. Therefore the medicine from Fiji was very powerful, and some of it most useful indeed.

(2) The male *taula-atua* of Lakepa, named Nukuhana. It was the custom of this man to pray to the ghosts to come. Then all the ghosts gathered together from the different islands. These ghosts had swollen legs, swollen arms, and swollen heads. They were no good. They only walked about and slept, but they did not find any people to attack. They were very lazy and they did not do very much work. Their medicines were useful to people, if the people were troubled with swollen legs, or swollen arms, or swollen heads.

(3) The male *taula-atua* of Liku. It was the custom of this *taula-atua* to go out when the cock crowed in the morning and visit his sick people. When he arrived at the home of his sick people he called out for his ghosts to come.

After a little time had passed the ghosts entered into the *taula-atua*. Then the *taula-atua* touched with his hands the sick man and recited his charm.

The custom of the ghosts of this *taula-atua* was to live beside the water, and it was their custom to ride on the waves when the ocean was rough and thus to come to shore (surf riding). Suddenly they would go and possess the waves, singing and laughing, and calling out, "Stay back if your body is weak." Then the *taula-atua* would answer, "Oh, my children, have you gone to a far country that I do not see you?"

(4) The female *taula-atua* of Hakupu. She had many ghosts (*aitu*). One of her ghosts ruled over all the others. These were the words of the *taula-atua*: "My chief ghost is very large; he is a man, but his hair is very long. He has two eyes in the back of his head, and two in the front of his head. It is his custom to see all of the people; nothing is hidden from him. He can see a man when he comes in the front of him, and also when he approaches from the rear. It is his custom to marry all of the women of the island during the night. He rules over all of the other ghosts."

(5) The male *taula-atua* of Avatele. It was his custom to remain in his house until the moon came up in the evening. Then the ghosts possessed him, and they talked in various languages, shaking his arms about, and calling out in loud voices. This is the song that they sang: "The wind will blow from the horizon. The people will go along the main road, they go from one side to the other, they go from east to west. They do not go straight along the road lest they be struck by the *aitu*."

He said that it was the custom of the ghosts to ride on *pau* leaves, and pieces of wood, and all the rubbish that floats in the sea. These were the canoes of the ghosts.

(6) The story of the male *taula-atua* of Tamakautonga. This *taula-atua* had one ghost. He said that it was the custom of his ghost to swallow money when people gave it to him. The money remained in his stomach. But if his parents asked him for the money he was able to let it come out of his stomach. The name of this ghost was Fatupu. He was called Fatupu because he swallowed money and he was able to disgorge it again.

The ghosts spoke good words to the *taula-atua*, and this made his medicines beneficial. The ghost gave no medicines to the sick people unless he was approached with money. When the ghost talks, the sick man is healed. The ghost has only to speak words from his mouth (the mouth of the *taula-atua*), and the sick man is healed.

(7) The male *taula-atua* of Hikutavaki. It was the custom of this *taula-atua* to rave at the time that he was possessed by his ghosts. It was his custom to dance and sing at twelve o'clock in the daytime. If the people went to his house to get him, he would suddenly flee. Sometimes his ghosts entered into him, and he fled to the barren bush and lived there alone. Then he would call out to the ghosts, using English and Rarotongan words. He said that the ghosts of Rarotonga were there.

It was his custom when he found himself surrounded by a crowd of people to go up and stay in the high places, and whistle down. He had handkerchiefs in his hands, and he waved these down to the people. If the people came up to him he fled, and entering his house, he shut his door.

It is evident from an examination of these documents that all of the *taula-atua* were not in the same class. Thus number 6 was evidently in good mental health, and was merely suffering from what is sometimes called the "money consciousness". On the other hand *taula-atua* number 7 presents an evident case of intermittent insanity.

The *taula-atua* were never regarded with awe in Niue, excepting when they were in a fit, and thus showed clear signs of being possessed by gods, or, in modern times, by ghosts. Feeble-mindedness is treated with scorn in Niue today, but insanity still calls forth respect.

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NOTES FROM THE MAYA AREA

By FRANS BLOM

DURING the years 1921-23, I had the opportunity of making some trips in the states of Tabasco and Chiapas in Southern Mexico and on these trips saw several Maya sites of which the two described below have not previously been reported.

The first of these is situated close to the Finca Encanto on a branch of the upper Tulija River. The Tulija River comes from the mountains behind Palenque and runs towards the northwest. By Salto de Agua it leaves the mountain ranges, and finally joins the Macuspana River below the town of Macuspana in Tabasco. The Finca Encanto belongs to a German American mahogany and coffee concern; it is situated in the heart of huge tropical forests, two days' ride over very bad mountain trails to the south of the famous ruins of Palenque. Three days' ride further to the south over even worse trails one reaches the settlement of Bachajon, inhabited by Indians of the Maya-Tzeltal tribe. The products of the Finca Encanto are transported in native dugouts on the Tulija River, a five days journey to Salto de Agua.

Arriving at the excellent houses of the Finca my attention was at once attracted by an oblong stone tablet lying in the pavement of a path leading up to the main house. And as I entered the porch that runs around the house, I saw another tablet inserted in one of the walls. These two tablets were covered with incised designs representing human figures of distinct Maya character.

The tablet (Figure 1) inserted in the wall of the house is the larger of the two. It measures 1.10 meters high by 80 centimeters broad, it is of a fine textured white limestone and the two figures represented on the surface are incised in outline. On the right side a walking person is represented; his face seems to be covered by a mask and on his head he wears an elaborate head-dress. He is walking towards a standing person and is carrying some kind of ceremonial bar under his left arm. In his right hand he is holding